



STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

Northwest Regional Office • 3190 160th Avenue SE • Bellevue, Washington 98008-5452 • (425) 649-7000

March 23, 2005

Site Update, BNSF Former Maintenance and Fueling Facility, Skykomish, Washington

Dear Community Member,

Since our last update letter in August 2004, a lot has been happening at this site. Here's a quick summary for you.

General cleanup progress: Ecology has made this cleanup a priority for the agency, and we are moving ahead at a fast pace. An outcome of this is that the cleanup team at Ecology has been expanded to meet community needs. We'd like to introduce Susan Lee who will be doing community involvement and educational outreach. She is available to discuss the cleanup or any related issue. Please feel free to contact her at the office at 425-649-4486, by cell phone at 360-790-9959, or by email at slee461@ecy.wa.gov.

Another important development is that Ecology and BNSF Railway have agreed to work together on the cleanup plans in a more collaborative way with each bringing resources to the cleanup goals. We want to begin cleanup work in July 2006, beginning with the levee. We are working on a cleanup plan that meets legal requirements, is protective of the health of people and the environment, and gives the best benefit for cost. And, just as important, the cleanup plan must be consistent with the goals of the Town of Skykomish.

Visioning: To ensure that the Town's goals are considered, Ecology has provided resources for the Town to hire a facilitator to assist them in picturing what they want their town to look like in the future. BNSF will provide staff resources to assist with the visioning effort. The information from this visioning will be used by Ecology when selecting the remedy for cleanup and writing the Cleanup Action Plan.

The Town has hired the firm of Berryman & Henigar to conduct the visioning. The Northwest Center for Livable Communities from the University of Washington will be assisting them. A committee has volunteered to help Mayor Charlotte Mackner work on the picture of Skykomish. The first meeting of the committee will be Wednesday, April 6, 2005. All people in Skykomish will be asked for their opinion regarding what they want the Town to be and look like. Please contact the Mayor at Town Hall for more information.

Draft Feasibility Study: The revised draft of the Feasibility Study has come in to Ecology. This document was prepared by BNSF and compared different cleanup



alternatives ranging from complete excavation of contaminated soil to just controlling exposure to the contamination. Ecology received public comment on the study in September 2003, and it has since been revised several times. Ecology will now begin reviewing the revised draft, and expects to make a decision on its finality this summer. The best treatments for cleanup of this site have not yet been determined, but in some areas will likely include excavating heavy oil from the ground and removing it from the groundwater.

Sampling to fill data gaps: Ecology conducted sampling in late 2004 to fill some data gaps for the remedial investigation. The final report of this sampling is now available in Skykomish at the Library, Town Hall, and with the SEC. In addition to getting a better understanding of the boundaries for oil contamination, an unexpected result of this sampling was finding dioxin behind the bus barn and fire station in old channel of Maloney Creek at a depth of 2 and a half feet under the creek bed. Ecology is currently taking additional samples to find out more and to understand where it might have come from. More information about this sampling will be available by summer.

Levee cleanup: Ecology and BNSF have agreed that the cleanup in Skykomish should begin with removing contamination under the flood control levee along West River Drive, and then replacing the levee. We are working together to finish all the cleanup-related documents and to obtain federal permits no later than June 2006, so that most of the levee cleanup work can be completed in 2006 when the river is low and before school is in session. The permit applications have been submitted to federal resources agencies, and engineering designs are being prepared.

Schedule: Many steps need to happen before work can begin on the levee cleanup in 2006. The Cleanup Action Plan and Consent Decree need to be completed and entered in the court. An updated Public Participation Plan, Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, and an Engineering Design Report for the levee replacement will also be included. Cleanup of the upland areas, including public areas of the Town, residences, businesses, school, rail yard, and Maloney Creek, are expected to begin in 2007. Please refer to the attached schedule for more detail.

If you have questions about all this work, please contact me at 425-649-7209 or by email at lbar461@ecy.wa.gov or Susan at the numbers listed above. We are really excited to be nearing the actual cleanup phase of this project and the resolution it will bring to the situation in Skykomish.

Sincerely,



Louise Bardy
Site Manager